



**THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.**  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

**FRED LEAF**  
Chief Operating Officer

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
313 N. Figueroa, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 240-8101

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May 21, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: NURSE TRAINING,  
RECRUITMENT AND EDUCATION**

At its March 5, 2002 meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion directing the Director of Health Services, in collaboration with the Director of Mental Health, the Sheriff, the Health Care Workforce Development Program, and Labor Management to report on issues related to nurse training, recruitment and retention. This follows my May 13, 2003 report and addresses the areas specified in the motion:

- 1. Discuss the feasibility of forming a joint Nursing Shortage Committee to explore ways in which Departments may collaborate to recruit, retain, and train nurses.**

Representatives from the Department of Health Services (DHS), Sheriff, Department of Mental Health (DMH), LA Healthcare Workforce Development Program (HCWDP), and Labor Management (SEIU 660) have met in the past to address the recruitment, retention, and educational needs of nursing staff for the County. We will be scheduling a meeting in July 2004.

The HCWDP is currently offering nursing program science pre-requisite courses for DHS employees who are in the pipeline to participate in the next round of RN and LVN courses that will begin in the second quarter of FY 04/05. Three psychiatric technicians from the DMH are participating in the science pre-requisite courses. Additional qualified candidates from the Sheriff's Department and the DMH could join our nursing program class groups as space permits. HCWDP will work with these two departments to identify qualified candidates.

- 2. Availability of Federal and State funds that may be utilized to enhance the County's nurse training, recruitment and retention efforts.**

HCWDP is a jointly sponsored SEIU Local 660 and DHS effort that is providing training and education to DHS employees including those interested in careers in nursing. HCWDP is

currently funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) through the Governor's Discretionary WIA funds. With the State WIA funds, HCWDP has established two RN training programs through contracts with East Los Angeles College and El Camino Community College and two Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) programs through a contract with the Los Angeles unified School District. In addition, HCWDP funds are supporting ten DHS employees who are attending certified nurse programs on their own time, and DHS employees who are attending the County College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions. HCWDP is also offering a variety of skill enhancement workshops for RNs and LVNs at KDMC and other county hospitals.

HCWDP is upgrading two nurse clinical skills laboratories at LAC+USC and OVMC with the State WIA funds.

### **3. Retraining programs for non-nursing employees interested in becoming nurses.**

On October 24, 2003, HCWDP began a two-year RN training program at El Camino Community College for 38 DHS employees working in non-nursing positions. The El Camino College program is 24 hours per week. Currently students are granted eight hours of County time per week for class and they attend 16 hours/week on their own time. The HCWDP is committed to provide tutoring and other assistance to ensure successful completion of the training program. Once they complete the training and pass the National Council of License Examination (NCLEX) for Registered Nurses, DHS will place the 38 employees on RN items.

On February 27, 2004, 34 employees began a 15-week Physiology class sponsored by the HCWDP at Valley Community College. Physiology class is one of several science courses required for entrance into a nursing program. Other science classes have been scheduled as follows:

- |                |                             |                          |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Microbiology | East Los Angeles College    | April 23 – July 30, 2004 |
| • Chemistry    | Cerritos Community College  | April 17 – July 24, 2004 |
| • Anatomy      | El Camino Community College | April 15 – July 17, 2004 |

Following successful completion of the science prerequisites, these employees will be placed in a HCWDP-sponsored RN training program.

On March 24, 2004, HCWDP began an 18-month part-time Vocational Nursing program for 34 employees, through a contract with L.A. Unified School District using the County's College of Nursing and Allied Health and the Olive View Medical Center facilities.

### **4. Tutoring and mentoring programs for the northern County area.**

Effective July 29, 2003, the Board approved the establishment of tutoring and mentoring programs at Los Angeles Valley and Glendale Community Colleges. These programs will be in place until June 30, 2005 and are in addition to the program previously established at East Los Angeles Community college.



**5. Nurse faculty grant program to enhance nursing school recruitment efforts.**

DHS Human Resources is exploring the possibility of funding a faculty position to support and expand enrollment in the Registered Nurse Program at the County's College of Nursing and Allied Health.

**6. Review course to assist Department of Health Services' employed nursing students in preparing for the NCLEX for Registered Nurses.**

HCWDP is sponsoring a RN-NCLEX review course designed to assist eligible DHS employees to successfully pass the exam and receive the RN license. HCWDP recently released a bulletin announcing the availability of the review course. Over 20 Board eligible DHS employees responded; Mount San Antonio Community College will conduct the review course in Spring 2004.

I will provide you with another status report by August 31, 2004. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

TLG:ggc  
203:018/s

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Director of Personnel  
Director of Mental Health  
Sheriff